was to organise as swiftly and as completely as possible a voluntary enrolment of all the available labour in the country, and at the same time to compile a census of the labour requirements of the nation's industries and activities, tabulating these in order of their importance for our war effort; so that on the one hand we might be able to know exactly where to lay our hands on the men needed for the Army, and on the other hand, might be able promptly to replace any taken from urgently important work by other men or women who were surplus or potentially surplus in less important occupations.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain was in short charged with the task of creating machinery capable of controlling and distributing in the most economical and effective manner the whole man-power of the country. To begin with, the man-power he would actually have at his disposal would, for civil purposes, be only so much of the whole as could be induced to volunteer, though for military purposes his field covered every fit man of military age. But both the previous Cabinet and my own had approved in principle the introduction of compulsory universal national service, and if voluntary enrolment failed, we were prepared to accord Mr. Chamberlain further powers ; so that he was required to construct his machinery in such a way that it could function efficiently as an instrument in

Mr. Chamber-
tel task

charge of all the nation's man-power.

The right to conscript for the Army involved an indirect measure of universal compulsion for all fit men of military age for all national purposes. Unless a man were needed and actually employed on some essential service at home, he was liable to be